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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/679,781	10/05/2000	Rodney Charles Dunsmore	AUS9-2000-0557-US1	8696

7590 06/03/2003
Kelly K Kordzik
100 Congress Avenue
Suite 800
Austin, TX 78701

EXAMINER

GORT, ELAINE L

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3627

DATE MAILED: 06/03/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/679,781

Applicant(s)

DUNSMORE ET AL.

Examiner

Elaine Gort

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 05 October 2000.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-65 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 1-28 and 41-54 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 29-40 and 55-65 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 05 October 2000 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 2.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other:

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. 121:
 - I. Claims 1-28, drawn to a method for payment of a bill, classified in class 709, subclass 16.
 - II. Claims 29-40 and 55-65, drawn to a system, classified in class 709, subclass 217.
 - III. Claims 41-54, drawn to a computer product operable for implementing a method for payment of a bill, classified in class 700, subclass 11.

The inventions are distinct, each from the other because of the following reasons:

Inventions I. and II. are related as process and apparatus for its practice. The inventions are distinct if it can be shown that either: (1) the process as claimed can be practiced by another materially different apparatus or by hand, or (2) the apparatus as claimed can be used to practice another and materially different process. (MPEP § 806.05(e)). In this case Invention I. can be carried out, at least in part, by another materially different apparatus. For example the steps of calculating a bill or taking orders could be carried out by hand.

Inventions I. and III. are related as process and apparatus for its practice. The inventions are distinct if it can be shown that either: (1) the process as claimed can be practiced by another materially different apparatus or by hand, or (2) the apparatus as claimed can be used to practice another and materially different process. (MPEP §

806.05(e)). In this case Invention I. can be carried out, at least in part, by another materially different apparatus. For example the steps of calculating a bill or taking orders could be carried out by hand.

Inventions II. and III. are related as subcombinations disclosed as usable together in a single combination. The subcombinations are distinct from each other if they are shown to be separately usable. In the instant case, Invention II. has separate utility. For example, the Invention II. system/payment unit could be used to perform market research, inventory tracking, or e-mail communication. See MPEP § 806.05(d).

Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above, because the search required for each Invention is not required for the other Inventions, and because the inventions have acquired a separate status in the art because of their recognized divergent subject matter, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

During a telephone conversation with Kelly Kordzik on May 27, 2003 a provisional election was made without traverse to prosecute the invention of Invention II., claims 29-40 and 55-65. Affirmation of this election must be made by applicant in replying to this Office action. Claims 1-28 and 41-54 are withdrawn from further consideration by the examiner, 37 CFR 1.142(b), as being drawn to a non-elected invention.

Applicant is reminded that upon the cancellation of claims to a non-elected invention, the inventorship must be amended in compliance with 37 CFR 1.48(b) if one or more of the currently named inventors is no longer an inventor of at least one claim

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remaining in the application. Any amendment of inventorship must be accompanied by a request under 37 CFR 1.48(b) and by the fee required under 37 CFR 1.17(i).

Drawings

2. This application has been filed with informal drawings which are acceptable for examination purposes only. Formal drawings will be required when the application is allowed.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 29-40 and 55-65 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Dorr (US Patent 4,530,067) in view of Meyer et al. (US Patent 5,933,812).

Dorr discloses a restaurant ordering and payment system with a waiter's terminal for taking orders from a plurality of patrons at a table which conveys the information to a waiter's terminal (e.g. the computer system tracking the orders and calculating the bill); the ability to pay at the table; a display showing the amount due and ability to do separate checks with credit cards via the system which allows a first portion based on a

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first patron to make a payment; and calculation of a balance owed and allowing subsequent patrons at the same table to pay until the remaining balance is zero.

Dorr discloses the claimed device except for the payment unit being physically located at the table. Meyer et al. discloses that it is old and well known in the art of restaurant billing and ordering to physically locate payment units at the table in order to allow customers to get the bill when they want it and pay at their convenience and to reduce the burden on the wait staff. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to provide the system of Dorr with a payment device located at the tables as taught by Meyer et al., in order to provide convenience to customers and to alleviate the burden on wait staff.

Regarding colored lamps to indicate if full payment is made, the use of indicators are notoriously old and well known in the art of data processing to indicate to users some important state, such as full or incomplete payment of the bill, and would have been obvious at the time of the invention to prevent patrons from walking off without paying.

Touch-sensitive screens are also notoriously old and well known in the art of data processing and data entry to allow users to simply touch the item they wish to activate on the screen which provides an extremely user friendly interface and would have been obvious at the time of the invention to provide patrons with an easy customer friendly interface.

All other claimed limitations are either disclosed or inherent.

Conclusion

5. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Elaine Gort whose telephone number is (703)308-6391. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Thursday from 7:00 am to 5:30 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Robert Olszewski, can be reached at (703)308-5183. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or processing is assigned is (703)305-7687.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703)308-1113.

EG 

June 2, 2003

 6/2/03

ROBERT P. OLSZEWSKI
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3600